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Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: The Madrid Meeting Resumes

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Summary

*Information available
as of 8 November 1982
was used in this report.*

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe review meeting in Madrid reconvened on 9 November after an eight-month recess caused by Western protests over the imposition of martial law in Poland. The immediate Soviet and East European goal at the Madrid meeting is to secure West European agreement to hold a European Disarmament Conference (CDE) even if the United States continues to oppose the idea. Because of recent US-West European differences in a number of policy areas, we believe the Soviets think their chances of success at Madrid have improved and they will be prepared to gloss over differences with the West Europeans on the details of a CDE in order to achieve agreement. The Soviets have indicated they will probably embrace a draft agreement submitted by the neutral and nonaligned (NNA) CSCE countries in December 1981 as the framework for both a CDE and future work in other CSCE areas, downplaying their own problems with the draft to highlight Western reservations.

The Soviets and East Europeans know from recent discussions with Western officials that they will face another verbal barrage from the Western states on Poland and other human rights issues, but they probably expect it to be limited in duration. Should the United States and West Europeans demonstrate a durable consensus in demanding that the East make significant concessions in the human rights realm, the Soviets will assume a more defensive and intransigent public stance and may signal their willingness to consider abandoning the CSCE review process.

The West Europeans are pleased with the Western negotiating position, achieved at the last minute, which calls for stronger security and human rights provisions than are in the nonaligned draft and for meetings after Madrid on human rights and family reunification. The Allies are pledged to maintain a tough negotiating position toward the East, but West Germany, France, and some others may be willing to ease their criticisms of the Polish situation if it appears possible to achieve agreement on a European Disarmament Conference. For most Allied governments, it is important simply to keep the negotiations alive to avoid blame for failure.

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We believe the chances of reaching consensus on a final document in Madrid are slim, unless martial law restrictions in Poland are eased. If the conference does deadlock, participants might try to preserve the CSCE review process by adopting a short, general statement that would keep open the prospects of a CDE while masking continuing discord.

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Background

The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Final Act concluded at Helsinki in 1975 reflected a compromise between the Eastern and Western Blocs. In exchange for de facto Western recognition of post-World War II boundaries, the USSR and its allies agreed to periodic scrutiny by the other signatories of their adherence to CSCE provisions. The first followup conference to Helsinki—in Belgrade in 1977 and 1978—was marred by East-West recrimination and produced a concluding document that did little more than provide for a subsequent review conference.

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The convening of the second followup meeting in Madrid in November 1980 initially reassured the USSR as well as the West Europeans that Soviet actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere outside Europe would not scuttle detente. The crisis in Poland—a profoundly European problem—and the steps taken by Warsaw and Moscow to deal with it, however, have raised more serious threats to the content and future of CSCE. This is especially true because reaching an agreement at CSCE review conferences is by nature a consensual process—in effect giving each conference participant a “veto” over the final document.

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Eastern Objectives

We believe Moscow's fundamental goals in CSCE remain unchanged: to affirm that detente prevails in Europe and that the USSR can partake of its fruits without relinquishing any of its power in Eastern Europe, its aims in the Third World, or its practices at home. The publicly announced immediate objective for the USSR and its allies at the Madrid meeting is to reach an agreement to convene a European Disarmament Conference (CDE).¹ There, Moscow could portray itself as a partner to the Europeans in arms control efforts and cast the United States as the major foe of arms

¹ The idea of a CDE was first proposed by France in 1978, and there is general agreement now among European states that such a conference should have two parts. During Phase I participants would attempt to agree on confidence-building measures designed to facilitate warning and verification of military maneuvers and intentions. These would include: notification of military maneuvers and out-of-garrison activities; an exchange of data on military forces, armaments, and deployments; provisions for verification of military exercises covered by the CDE agreement; plus ceilings on the size and composition of forces engaged in certain maneuvers. Unlike the similar but voluntary confidence-building measures approved at Helsinki, these would be mandatory and legally binding. In Phase II the conferees would attempt to negotiate an asymmetrical reduction of conventional air/ground weapons with a high offensive capability and related manpower and logistic support.

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limitation. Short of that, Moscow has made clear it will try to pin any failure to reach agreement on the United States. The Soviets have said they want to preserve and extend the economic and technological cooperation promoted in the Helsinki Final Act. By signing the Final Act in 1975, they proved willing to loosen some restrictions on information exchange and human contacts with the West to secure those and other benefits. []

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Judging by the positive tone of the communique from the Warsaw Pact Foreign Ministers' meeting in Moscow on 21-22 October and recent media commentary, the Soviets are more hopeful than at any time since the Madrid review conference began that their objectives are within reach. Soviet and East European media have taken careful note of West European dissatisfaction with US policies on East-West trade and with the slow pace of arms control negotiations, and Moscow probably calculates that West European impatience extends to the US stance at CSCE as well. The East almost certainly will pursue its "wedge driving" tactics between the United States and its Allies even more blatantly than before. A Soviet CSCE official's reassurances to a US counterpart two months ago that the USSR did not want to take advantage of divisions between the United States and the West Europeans clearly was intended as a warning signal that the East is fully aware of the opportunities presented. []

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Despite their more confident attitude, we believe the USSR still has mixed feelings about the CSCE review process. The Soviets almost certainly appreciate that Poland—which caused the West to force CSCE into recess last March—will again be the object of Western attack at Madrid. They must expect that the Soviet and East European human rights records will also remain an issue, and the Soviets may find they are not exempt from criticism for lack of progress in arms talks in Geneva and Vienna. While maintaining adherence to the provisions of the CSCE Final Act at Helsinki, the Soviets have at times hinted at a willingness to abandon the CSCE review process if Western delegations did not desist from their criticism and other attempts to "interfere in the internal affairs" of Poland and other Eastern countries. []

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Western Objectives

The chief West European goals at CSCE—as the Dutch NATO representative said last month—will be to preserve Western unity, work toward a successful conclusion of the Madrid conference, and provide for a post-Madrid European Disarmament Conference. In October the members of the European Community (EC) adopted a two-pronged negotiating policy to be pursued at Madrid: a review of Eastern Bloc human rights

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implementation in Poland and elsewhere, followed by negotiations with the East on a draft final document prepared by the neutral and nonaligned countries (NNAs).² [REDACTED] 25X1

The West Europeans are pleased that they were able at the last minute to formulate a common negotiating position with the United States for the Madrid meetings. In exchange for US agreement to negotiate on the NNA draft, the European Allies are pledged to press for stronger security and human rights provisions than appear now in that document as well as for meetings on human rights and human contacts. The West Germans and French probably hope the Madrid meeting will actually lead to a CDE, but we believe the primary goal for other Allies is simply to keep the talks going so the West will not be blamed for failure. [REDACTED] 25X1

West Germany has taken the lead in calling for progress at CSCE, and officials in both the Schmidt and Kohl governments have repeatedly stressed to US officials in Washington and Bonn that they place the greatest importance on negotiating a balanced concluding document and a CDE mandate at Madrid. Foreign Minister Genscher remains personally committed to a CDE. We believe that Bonn's advocacy of the CSCE talks is in large part motivated by the fear that a rigid Western attitude would have negative repercussions domestically; almost all segments of the West German political spectrum view the CSCE process as a continuing symbol of detente with the East. West German Federal Disarmament Director Fred Ruth stressed in late September to State Department officials in Washington that preserving the Madrid talks strengthened the government's domestic position on other foreign policy issues, and that a rapid breakdown of CSCE could undercut public support in West Germany and other Allied countries for INF deployments. [REDACTED] 25X1

A French foreign office official, in a meeting with US diplomats in Paris this October, reiterated his country's strong support for substantive negotiations at Madrid. He argued that CSCE benefits the West more than the Soviet Bloc and that it remained essential to demonstrate progress at Madrid in order to maintain the CSCE process. [REDACTED] 25X1

A Danish foreign office official who represents his country at CSCE and the EC claimed to United States diplomats in September that the West Europeans are also concerned that differences with the United States over

² The NNA draft concluding document was written before the imposition of martial law in Poland and was presented to CSCE delegations in December of 1981. It represents an effort by European neutrals to reach compromise between Eastern and Western participants in assessing implementation of Final Act provisions, establishing the framework for a CDE, and charting future work in other CSCE areas. [REDACTED] 25X1

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CSCE could exacerbate difficulties within NATO over the gas pipeline and Allied defense spending, and could destroy the Western unity which has heretofore been a hallmark of the Madrid meetings. Ruth and other Allied officials have repeatedly argued that the Soviets would be able to exploit these divisions, blame CSCE's failure on the West, and score a propaganda victory with the NNAs and European public opinion. [] 25X1

At a NATO heads of delegations meeting in October, all Allied representatives but the US delegate argued that the CSCE process benefits the West more than the East and gives the West an opportunity to take the diplomatic offensive against the Eastern Bloc. The West Europeans stress that there are a number of other human rights issues in addition to Poland—including persecution of religious minorities, interruption of telephone communications, and freedom of movement for journalists and tourists. They argue that the West could successfully use these issues against the Eastern countries and that the opportunity to follow up on these issues would be lost if Madrid ends in failure. [] 25X1

The West Europeans also have told US officials repeatedly that they believe strongly that a post-Madrid CDE is to the West's advantage because it would include Soviet territory up to the Urals and would help counter general Soviet "peace initiatives" by promoting specific confidence-building measures (CBMs) in Europe. West German defense and foreign ministry officials recently told US diplomats they are especially committed to a CDE because they would like to see the application of CBMs beyond the Central European boundaries adhered to in the MBFR negotiations. [] 25X1

Neutrals' Objectives ³

The European neutrals continue to have a major stake in CSCE since it is the only security forum in which they play a direct role. Disunity between the Swiss and most other neutrals, however, has hampered their efforts to break the deadlock between East and West. [] 25X1

Switzerland traditionally has been pessimistic on Madrid's prospects, and the Swiss CSCE delegation chief told US officials in October that he believes little progress is possible because of Poland. In contrast, an Austrian CSCE official recently told a US diplomat in Vienna that Austria, Finland, and almost all other neutrals favor concluding the

³ The neutral countries generally include those European states not associated with either the Warsaw Pact or the NATO caucus. There is, however, no fixed neutral and nonaligned voting bloc. [] 25X1

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Madrid talks with a document based on the NNA draft. The same official recently expressed his fear that the USSR would take advantage of any Western disunity, embrace the NNA draft in its present form at Madrid, and attempt to drive the neutral countries into Soviet arms. [REDACTED]

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Strategies at Madrid

We believe the Soviets and their allies will press for agreement on a long, substantive final document based on the NNA draft of last December. They will warn the Western and NNA delegations that the progress made so far at Madrid would be forfeited if a short concluding document is adopted. We expect the East will endure criticism of the Polish situation and other Eastern shortcomings, hopeful that the West Europeans will not allow it to threaten the other purposes of the review meeting. The USSR and its allies will urge, above all, a mandate for a European security conference. Should Western criticism and pressure regarding human rights issues persist to the point of threatening a CDE and other Eastern goals, the Soviets will probably assume a more defensive and intransigent stance, amplifying their public allegations that the West is subverting the CSCE process. If their efforts to prevail upon the West Europeans to modify their approach prove futile and agreement on a CDE is forestalled, we believe the Soviets ultimately could withdraw altogether from the review process.

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A Danish foreign ministry official in Copenhagen reported to US diplomats that EC members want to open the Madrid conference with a debate on how signatories have observed CSCE provisions before moving on to negotiations on a concluding document. According to the Danes, EC members have agreed to criticize martial law restrictions in Poland vigorously during the initial plenary sessions. Community members then want to proceed to negotiations on the NNA draft, and they plan to propose amendments designed to strengthen its human rights and security provisions. The Danes report that most Community members do not believe it possible to reach agreement with the East on the NNA draft in light of Poland, but they want to continue the negotiations so the West will not be blamed for a Madrid failure. [REDACTED]

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According to an Austrian CSCE delegate, most neutrals are committed to boosting the NNA draft concluding document, and we believe they will remain so well into the conference despite their skepticism about the possibilities for an agreement. The Swiss CSCE delegation chief recently told a US diplomat, however, that he believes the Madrid meetings will deadlock after three or four weeks. His country then plans to submit a cut down version of the NNA draft followed later by an even shorter document that merely sets the time and place for the next meetings and provides for experts meetings on human rights and disarmament. [REDACTED]

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Security Issues

Recent Soviet statements, both public and private, confirm that Eastern delegations will strive to keep the focus on what progress has been made on the so-called Basket I security issues: sovereign equality, refraining from the threat or use of force, inviolability of frontiers, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, and non-intervention in internal affairs. The Soviets and East Europeans will continue to point to concessions they have made concerning the zone of application of military confidence-building measures (including prior notification of military maneuvers, military movements, and exchange of military visits) and demand reciprocal Western concessions. We expect them to demand inclusion of air and sea areas in the maneuver-notification zone in return for Brezhnev's offer in February of 1981 at the Soviet Communist Party Congress to extend the zone eastward to the Urals. []

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A mandate for a European disarmament conference remains the primary Eastern goal at Madrid, however, and the Soviets probably will try to exploit West European interest in such a conference and defer discussion of details. In that case, they will reiterate their earlier proposal that deciding on the extent of a CBM zone be left to the conference itself. We believe the Soviets will play on West European disappointment over the US-Soviet deadlock in the INF and START talks and promise greater progress in CDE—an entirely European arms control forum. []

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A post-Madrid disarmament conference remains a priority for the European Allies, and they agree—at least for now—that it should be a part of the CSCE process rather than a separate security forum. They have consistently argued that such a conference should concentrate on the confidence-building approach rather than actual disarmament, and most probably believe that substantial progress has been made at the initial Madrid session toward getting the Soviets to agree that CBMs should be militarily significant, mandatory, and adequately verifiable. []

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We believe the most contentious security issue, both with Moscow and within the Alliance, will be the area of CBM application. Heretofore, the West Europeans have joined with the United States in rejecting Soviet calls that the West include sea and air space adjacent to Europe. In light of progress at Madrid in other areas, the West Europeans may now be more willing than before to expand the area of a CBM regime. A UK defense ministry official has recently suggested to US diplomats that it may be time for the West to compromise on this issue in order to achieve a CDE. In addition, Portugal may support including the Azores—a major transit point for potential US deployments to the Middle East or Southwest

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Asia—in CBM coverage. The Portuguese have already served notice that they now consider the Azores to be part of “Europe,” a position that strengthens claims of continued Portuguese sovereignty. [redacted]

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Economic Issues

Basket II economic negotiations on increased trade and scientific and technological cooperation have almost been wrapped up, and agreed language on the subjects is included in the NNA draft. Nevertheless, the Soviets seized quickly on the controversy in the West over US trade sanctions, and we expect they will continue at Madrid to accuse the United States of violating the provisions on economic, scientific, and technological cooperation under Basket II. [redacted]

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The East probably anticipates little diminution in West European interest in preserving detente in the economic sphere. Warsaw recently raised the US denial of Most Favored Nation status to Poland as a violation of Basket II principles. The Soviets are watching closely US efforts to come to an agreement with the West Europeans on trade policy toward Warsaw Pact countries, and Eastern delegates at Madrid will probe to discover any delays in this process or lingering West European resentment. [redacted]

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The West Europeans may well regard the inclusion of a number of important economic agreements in the NNA draft as an added incentive to work toward a successful conclusion of the conference. We expect they will make only limited responses to Eastern criticism of US trade restrictions in plenary sessions while continuing to seek a compromise with Washington permitting the United States to lift its embargoes on oil and gas equipment. [redacted]

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Human Rights Issues

Western criticism of Eastern violations of the human rights provisions under Baskets I (respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief) and III (human contacts and information exchanges) poses the greatest obstacle to Moscow's objectives. The quashing of the 31 August disturbances in Poland and the subsequent banning of the Solidarity trade union have helped hold Western attention to the Polish situation, and the Soviets—recalling the violent reaction at Madrid last winter to the imposition of martial law—no doubt are braced for another concerted Western assault on the martial law regime. Other sources indicate they know they can also expect renewed criticism for their increasing harassment of political and religious dissidents in the USSR and East European countries, on the

continued jamming of radiobroadcasts into the Eastern countries, and other violations of the letter and spirit of the Helsinki Final Act. We expect more recent developments, such as the dissolution in September of the Helsinki Watch Committee—the group of Soviet dissidents who monitored Moscow's compliance with the human rights provisions of the Final Act—and Moscow's cutback in telephone links to the West, almost certainly will engender additional criticism. [REDACTED]

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Soviet and East European media have again warned that such “interference” by the West will not be tolerated and that criticism will be met in kind. The East probably believes, however, that the criticism will not be as sharp or as prolonged as it was last winter. It also remains unclear whether the Soviets would consider making some token moves in the realm of human rights if it became clear that agreement on security issues required such gestures. A Soviet CSCE delegate recently claimed that the USSR is not willing to pay any price for a CDE, but then implied that a significant Western compromise on the area of CBM application would be a quid pro quo for possible Eastern concessions on human rights. We believe the Soviets probably will continue to oppose Western demands for a post-Madrid experts' meeting on human rights and one on human contacts, but may eventually agree in principle to the latter—which is more strongly advocated by the United States—provided the United States agrees to hold a CDE. We also believe the Soviets, as always, will strenuously resist appearing to give into Western demands. [REDACTED]

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The human rights issue also presents the West Europeans with a negotiating dilemma. Allied officials have stated repeatedly at NATO meetings that while they plan to toughen their condemnations of the Polish situation in order to satisfy Washington, they do not want to drive the Soviets away from the CSCE framework. A Danish foreign ministry official who was present when the EC foreign ministers mapped out their strategies for Madrid reported in October that Community members will use the early plenary sessions to debate the Polish situation, and use working groups to strengthen the human rights provisions of the NNA draft final document. A Belgian foreign ministry official reports that because of their strong commitment to a CDE, the French and West Germans were adamant that the other members only submit amendments which they believe have a reasonable chance of being accepted by all participants. [REDACTED]

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The same Belgian official also noted, however, that despite agreeing to a common EC negotiating position for Madrid, many Community members—we believe led by the UK, Belgium, and Italy—were skeptical about the possibility of reaching a compromise with the East following extended debates over Poland. At a late October NATO meeting, the Italian

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representative stressed that the West must take the changed situation in Poland into account when presenting amendments to the NNA draft, and the draft should be used as a "starting point" rather than as a basis for negotiations. We think it unlikely that the more skeptical Allies will pursue negotiations on the draft with enthusiasm, and we believe a continuing Polish crisis may even lead them to introduce amendments on points where agreement already has been reached with the East. [] 25X1

We believe the West Europeans will maintain a common negotiating front in favor of a strengthened NNA draft and post-Madrid conferences on human rights and human contacts through the early phases of the Madrid Conference. During the later stages, however, we expect the West Germans and French to pressure the other Allies to compromise with the East in order to achieve a CDE mandate. A British Government official recently told US diplomats in London he could not predict with confidence how the UK would respond to such pressure from its most powerful EC partners. [] 25X1

CSCE Prospects and Followup

The future of the CSCE review process—provided for in Basket IV of the Final Act—may now be more at risk than at any time since Helsinki. Soviet officials, aware of Western and NNA doubts about reaching a successful conclusion at Madrid, have made clear they nevertheless will press for agreement on the NNA draft, no doubt in the hope that they will be able to blame any collapse at Madrid on the West. The Soviets have indicated in recent conversations with Western CSCE officials that they are willing to remain in Madrid beyond Christmas if necessary. [] 25X1

We believe Eastern delegations will try to direct skepticism about the superpowers' commitment to CSCE exclusively toward the United States. Among other things, the Soviets and their allies probably will play down their own problems with the NNA draft and the impasse on human rights, and highlight US reservations as obstructionist. We expect them to demonstrate their vaunted commitment to the continuation of the CSCE process by reiterating their support for Romania's bid to host the next followup meeting. Many Western and neutral delegations oppose Bucharest because of Romania's human rights policies. [] 25X1

Meeting with the assembled Warsaw Pact foreign ministers in Moscow late last month, Soviet President Brezhnev stressed that the USSR was interested not only in preserving the CSCE process but in strengthening it. His declaration marked no change in official policy, as the Soviets have always been publicly committed to CSCE. The tone of determination and self-assurance, however, suggested that Moscow is more confident than

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before that the review process over the near term will not diverge significantly from Soviet interests, and that if it is interrupted, the United States is more likely to be held at fault. The Soviets continue to take credit for initiating CSCE and still derive some benefit from it. We believe that unless the Polish situation deteriorates drastically or another serious threat develops, Moscow will probably maintain at least a verbal commitment to the Final Act. [REDACTED]

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A Danish foreign office official who represents his country at CSCE and the EC told US diplomats in September that Community members will try to use the working groups to narrow differences between East and West in the hope that Warsaw will lift martial law and release enough detainees by the end of the year to permit progress on a concluding document in the spring. The Austrian CSCE section chief told US diplomats in Vienna that Austria and other neutrals also hope to sustain negotiations so that the situation in Poland can improve enough to permit acceptance of a CSCE final document. [REDACTED]

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We consider the Polish situation as the key element in shaping the Allied position at CSCE. The Canadians have recently circulated a working paper in NATO calling on the West to take a "realistic" and "flexible" view in assessing Warsaw's progress in lifting martial law, releasing political detainees, and maintaining a dialogue with the Church and trade unions. If the Polish Government makes some gestures (even cosmetic ones), we believe most Allies and neutrals will step up pressure on the United States to sign an amended NNA draft, including a CDE mandate. Conversely, if the strikes called for by Solidarity on 10 November erupt in large-scale violence between union members and Polish security forces, we believe the Allies and most neutrals will step up their criticism of Eastern human rights implementation and would be prepared to see the Madrid conference recess for several more months or even adjourn in failure. [REDACTED]

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If the Polish crisis does not deepen, we believe the Soviets will attempt to exploit divisions between the West Europeans and the United States in order to place the blame for failure on the West. In such circumstances, we believe the Allies would argue to the United States that Western strategy at Madrid should be to preserve a united front in negotiating on the NNA draft and the specifics of a CDE mandate. We believe they would be prepared to engage in substantial renegotiation of that draft in order to secure continued US participation in the talks. They probably calculate that such a strategy could force the Soviets to terminate the negotiations, thus shifting the blame for a failed conference on the Eastern bloc. Alternatively, it might result in a concluding document that the West Europeans would hail as a vindication of Western CSCE strategy. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets, we conclude, are clearly intent on securing a CDE at Madrid and might be willing to make some token gestures on human rights if the United States and the West Europeans made it clear that progress on security issues would accompany such moves. The USSR is unlikely, however, to negotiate the type of concessions in the NNA draft necessary to secure a consensus agreement. [REDACTED] 25X1

If the Madrid conference becomes hopelessly deadlocked, we expect the West Europeans and neutrals to try to find some way to keep the CSCE process alive. While the Allies and most NNAs currently are opposed to the short document proposal advocated by Switzerland, a French CSCE official has not ruled out this alternative. We believe that Soviets might also accept a short concluding document if it included specific provisions keeping CDE prospects alive. [REDACTED] 25X1

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